Docket No. AUS920010214US1

METHOD AND APPARATUS FOR INCORPORATING SCANNED CHECKS INTO FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

The present invention is related to the following applications: *Method and Apparatus for Processing Checks at an Automatic Teller Machine for Electronic Transfer*, serial no. _____, attorney docket no. AUS920010211US1; *Method and Apparatus for Processing a Check within a Financial System*, serial no. _____, attorney docket no. AUS920010213US1; *Method and Apparatus for Bill Payments at an Automatic Teller Machine*, serial no. _____, attorney docket no. AUS9200102015US1; and *Method and Apparatus for Facilitating Transactions at an Automatic Teller Machine*, serial no. _____, attorney docket no. AUS920010216US1, filed even date hereof, assigned to the same assignee, and incorporated herein by reference.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Technical Field:

The present invention relates generally to an improved data processing system and in particular to a method and apparatus for processing checks. Still more particularly, the present invention provides a method and apparatus for integrating check information into financial applications.

2. Description of Related Art:

Many financial applications and programs are present for users to perform financial planning and management. For example, Quicken 2001 Deluxe is a financial planning program available from Intuit, Inc. Versions of such programs such as Pocket Quicken are available for mobile devices like the Palm handhelds available from Palm, Inc. Quicken 2001 Deluxe and other programs allow for managing finances in areas, such as, for example, banking, investing, taxes, planning, loans, and spending and saving. Many of these programs allow a user to pay bills on-line or to access information from a user's financial institution. A user may even access checks issued by a user along with an identification of which checks have cleared.

These types of capabilities, however, do not reflect checks issued to a user. Presently, a user is required to enter check information into the financial program, deposit the checks, and reconcile deposits from financial statements received from the user's financial information.

Therefore, it would be advantageous to have an improved method and apparatus for providing easier entry of information for checks issued to a user.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides an improved method, apparatus, and computer implemented instructions for processing a check in an automatic teller machine in a data processing system. A check is received from a user at the automatic teller machine. The check is scanned to generate an image. A transaction is performed involving the check. The image is transmitted to a client device associated with the user, wherein the image is in a format for use with a financial program. Additionally, checks issued by a user at an automatic teller machine (ATM) may be stored as an image and transmitted to the mobile device.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The novel features believed characteristic of the invention are set forth in the appended claims. The invention itself, however, as well as a preferred mode of use, further objectives and advantages thereof, will best be understood by reference to the following detailed description of an illustrative embodiment when read in conjunction with the accompanying drawings, wherein:

Figure 1 depicts a pictorial representation of a network of data processing systems in which the present invention may be implemented;

Figure 2 is a block diagram of a data processing system that may be implemented as a server in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 3 is a diagram of a client in the form of a personal digital assistant (PDA) in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 4 is a block diagram of a PDA in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 5 is a diagram illustrating an automatic teller machine (ATM) in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 6 is a block diagram illustrating an ATM in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 7 is a diagram illustrating transfer of information for import into a financial application in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 8 is a diagram illustrating data flow in creating a check image in accordance with a preferred

embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 9 is a diagram of a smart card, which may be used to create an electronic check, in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 10 is a diagram of a check presented on a display for completion in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 11 is a diagram illustrating software components in an ATM in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figures 12A-12B are diagrams of an electronic check in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 13 is an illustration of a message sent from an ATM to a financial institution in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 14 is a flowchart of a process used for creating an electronic check in an ATM in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 15 is a flowchart of a process used for creating an electronic check in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 16 is a flowchart of a process used for processing a check deposited at an ATM in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 17 is a flowchart of a process used for processing check information in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention;

Figure 18 is a diagram illustrating header and data information used for translating data into a Quicken interchange format (QIF) in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention; and

Figure 19, is a sample QIF file, which may be processed by the present invention.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

With reference now to the figures, **Figure 1** depicts a pictorial representation of a network of data processing systems in which the present invention may be implemented. Network data processing system **100** is a network of computers in which the present invention may be implemented. Network data processing system **100** contains a network **102**, which is the medium used to provide communications links between various devices and computers connected together within network data processing system **100**. Network **102** may include connections, such as wire, wireless communication links, or fiber optic cables.

In the depicted example, a server **104** is connected to network **102** along with storage unit **106**. Server **104** is a computer located at a financial institution, such as a bank, a credit union, a mortgage company, or a brokerage firm.

Server **104** is used to provide various functions relating to daily financial transactions handled by the bank, such as deposits and withdrawals of funds. In addition, ATMs **108**, **110**, and **112** also are connected to network **102**. ATMs **108**, **110**, and **112** are clients to server **104**. Server **104** is in communication with ATMs **108**, **110**, and **112** to handle various transactions that users may initiate at these devices. For example, if a user withdraws cash from ATM **108**, the debiting of the account is handled by server **104**.

Server **114** and server **116** also are connected to network **102** and may represent computers located at other

financial institutions. ATMs **108**, **110**, and **112** also may be clients to these servers depending on the particular user accessing ATMs **108**, **110** and **112**. Additionally, these servers may also represent computers located at other financial institutions, such as a regional clearing house, a national clearing house, or a Federal Reserve Bank.

The present invention provides for scanning of checks at an ATM, such as ATM **108**, when a user deposits a check with the financial institution. An image of both sides of the check is made when the check is deposited. Additionally, optical character recognition (OCR) is performed on the check to obtain information such as the recipient of the check and the amount of funds to be transferred from the account. Further, a magnetic ink reader reads magnetic ink data on the check to obtain information, such as the bank's identification number, as well as the user's checking account number with the bank. A markup language document is created containing this other information obtained from the check. The markup language document forms an electronic check. Additionally, the image of the check also may be associated with the markup language document as part of the electronic check. This electronic check is then sent from ATM **108** to server **104** for processing.

The image of a check or the electronic check may be processed and stored so that a user can access this information, such as from a secure Web site. Further, this information may be put into a format for downloading to a user from this site in which the information may be easily imported into a financial program. For example, Quicken 2001 Deluxe, which is available from Inuit, Inc.,

allows for downloading of financial files in a Quicken interchange format (QIF). The present invention may associate images files with this type of format file so that images of checks may be displayed or downloaded by a user for use within the financial program. In this manner, a user may easily download images of checks and associated financial data in a tightly integrated fashion. This information may include both checks issued by the user and deposited by the user.

Network data processing system **100** may include additional servers, clients, and other devices not shown. In the depicted example, network data processing system **100** is the Internet with network **102** representing a worldwide collection of networks and gateways that use the TCP/IP suite of protocols to communicate with one another. Of course, network data processing system **100** also may be implemented as a number of different types of networks, such as, for example, an intranet, a local area network (LAN), or a wide area network (WAN). **Figure 1** is intended as an example, and not as an architectural limitation, for the present invention.

Referring to **Figure 2**, a block diagram of a data processing system that may be implemented as a server, such as server **104**, **114**, or **116** in **Figure 1**, is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. Data processing system **200** may be a symmetric multiprocessor (SMP) system including a plurality of processors **202** and **204** connected to system bus **206**. Alternatively, a single processor system may be employed. Also connected to system bus **206** is memory controller/cache **208**, which provides an interface to local memory **209**. I/O bus bridge **210** is connected to

system bus **206** and provides an interface to I/O bus **212**. Memory controller/cache **208** and I/O bus bridge **210** may be integrated as depicted.

Peripheral component interconnect (PCI) bus bridge **214** connected to I/O bus **212** provides an interface to PCI local bus **216**. A number of modems may be connected to PCI local bus **216**. Typical PCI bus implementations will support four PCI expansion slots or add-in connectors. Communications links to ATMs **108-112** in **Figure 1** may be provided through modem **218** and network adapter **220** connected to PCI local bus **216** through add-in boards.

Additional PCI bus bridges **222** and **224** provide interfaces for additional PCI local buses **226** and **228**, from which additional modems or network adapters may be supported. In this manner, data processing system **200** allows connections to multiple network computers. A memory-mapped graphics adapter **230** and hard disk **232** may also be connected to I/O bus **212** as depicted, either directly or indirectly.

Those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the hardware depicted in **Figure 2** may vary. For example, other peripheral devices, such as optical disk drives and the like, also may be used in addition to or in place of the hardware depicted. The depicted example is not meant to imply architectural limitations with respect to the present invention.

The data processing system depicted in **Figure 2** may be, for example, an IBM e-Server pSeries system, a product of International Business Machines Corporation in Armonk, New York, running the Advanced Interactive Executive (AIX) operating system or LINUX operating

system.

With reference now to **Figure 3**, a diagram of a client in the form of a personal digital assistant (PDA) is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. PDA **300** may be employed by a user to receive financial information and images of checks directly from an ATM at which the user deposits a check.

PDA **300** includes a display **302** for presenting textual and graphical information. Display **302** may be a known display device, such as a liquid crystal display (LCD) device. The display may be used to present a map or directions, calendar information, a telephone directory, or an electronic mail message. In these examples, display **302** may receive user input using an input device such as, for example, stylus **310.**

PDA **300** may also include keypad **304**, speaker **306**, and antenna **308**. Keypad **304** may be used to receive user input in addition to using screen **302**. Speaker **306** provides a mechanism for audio output, such as presentation of an audio file. Antenna **308** provides a mechanism used in establishing a wireless communications link between PDA **300** and a network, such as network **102** in **Figure 1**.

PDA **300** also preferably includes a graphical user interface that may be implemented by means of systems software residing in computer readable media in operation within PDA **300**.

Turning now to **Figure 4**, a block diagram of a PDA is shown in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. PDA **400** is an example of a PDA, such as PDA **300** in **Figure 3**, in which code or instructions

implementing the processes of the present invention may be located. PDA **400** includes a bus **402** to which processor **404** and main memory **406** are connected. Display adapter **408**, keypad adapter **410**, storage **412,** and audio adapter **414** also are connected to bus **402**. Communications unit **416** provides a mechanism to allow communication between PDA **400** and another device, such as an ATM. Any wireless communications system may be employed within communications unit **416** in these examples. Bluetooth is an example of a wireless technology that may be used in communications unit **416**. Bluetooth is a de facto standard, as well as a specification for small-form factor, low-cost, short range radio links between mobile PCs, mobile phones, and other portable devices. Further, display adapter **408** also includes a mechanism to receive user input from a stylus when a touch screen display is employed.

An operating system runs on processor **404** and is used to coordinate and provide control of various components within PDA **400** in **Figure 4**. The operating system may be, for example, a commercially available operating system such as Windows CE, which is available from Microsoft Corporation. Instructions for the operating system and applications or programs are located on storage devices, such as storage **412**, and may be loaded into main memory **406** for execution by processor **404.**

Those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the hardware in **Figure 4** may vary depending on the implementation. Other internal hardware or peripheral devices, such as flash ROM (or equivalent nonvolatile memory) or optical disk drives and the like, may be used

in addition to or in place of the hardware depicted in **Figure 4**.

Turning next to **Figure 5**, a diagram illustrating an automatic teller machine (ATM) is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. ATM **500** is an illustration of an ATM, such as ATM **108**, **110**, or **112** in **Figure 1**.

In this example, an ATM card or a smart card may be received in slot **502**. ATM **500** also includes an input slot **504** and an output slot **506**. Input slot **504** is used to receive items, such as cash or a check for deposit. Cash dispenser slot **508** is used to dispense cash to a user. Keypad **510** provides an input device for a user to input information, such as an amount of money that is to be deposited, or to make selections, such as receiving an account balance or an amount of cash to withdraw. Display **512** is used to present information to the user. Video camera **514** provides for recording transactions.

Turning next to **Figure 6**, a block diagram illustrating an ATM is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. ATM **600** may be implemented as in ATM **108**, **110**, or **112** in **Figure 1**.

In the depicted examples, bus **602** connects processor unit **604**, memory **606**, hard disk drive **608**, I/O controller **610**, and communications unit **612**. Computer instructions may be located in memory **606** or in hard disk drive **608**. These instructions are processed by processor unit **604** to provide ATM functions as well as the check scanning and electronic check creation processes of the present invention. Additionally, transaction information may

also be stored on hard disk drive **608**. Communications unit **612** provides for establishing a communications link with a server, such as server **104**, **114**, or **116** in **Figure 1** through a network, such as network **102** in **Figure 1**. In this example, communications unit **612** may take the form of an Ethernet adapter to provide for communications with various financial institutions. Further, communications unit **612** may also include a wireless communications module, such as a Bluetooth based wireless communications unit, to allow for communications with devices, such as PDA **400** in **Figure 4**.

I/O controller **610** provides a mechanism for input/output devices, such as, for example, display **614**, card reader **616**, printer **618**, output slot feeder **620**, input slot feeder **622**, scanner **624**, keypad **626**, check processing unit **628**, and cash dispenser **630**. Display **614** provides a mechanism to present information to the ATM user. Card reader **616** is used to read an ATM card or a smart card inserted into the ATM. Printer **618** is used to print a receipt or other information in response to a user input. Keypad **626** is used to receive user input. Output slot feeder **620** is used to feed receipts generated by printer **618** to an output slot, such as output slot **506** in **Figure 5**. Input slot reader **622** is used to receive checks or cash placed into an input slot, such as input slot **504** in **Figure 5**. Check processing unit **628** is used to move a check within the ATM. In particular, check processing unit **628** may move a check into a position for scanning by scanner **624** and then move the check into storage. If a check in not accepted, the check may be returned to output slot **620** for return to a user. Cash

dispenser **630** is used to dispense cash when a user withdraws funds from a user account.

The components depicted in **Figures 3-6** are provided for purposes of illustration and are not meant to imply architectural limitations to the present invention.

With reference now to **Figure 7**, a diagram illustrating transfer of information for import into a financial application is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. A user may deposit a check at ATM **700** to credit the user's account with a financial institution. In these examples, the check is scanned within ATM **700** to create an image of the check. This check and information obtained from the check may be sent to server **702** located at the financial institution through network **704**. Information regarding the deposit of the check may be returned to ATM **700** from server **702**. This information, as well as an image of the check, may be downloaded to the user through a mobile device, such as PDA **706**. PDA **706** is shown for purposes of illustration, and other mobile devices, such as a mobile phone, also may be used. In the depicted examples, the information is placed into a format that may be imported by various financial programs. The user may then upload the information to client **708** for import to financial program **710**. In this manner, check images and other financial information may be easily integrated into financial programs or applications. Financial programs also could be located in PDA **706** depending on the implementation.

Additionally, the check image and other financial information may be sent or made available to a user

through a Web site or by sending of an e-mail. For example, the check image and information may be placed into a file in a format for import to a financial program on a secure Web site. The user accesses the Web site through client **708** by entering an appropriate ID and password. The user may then download the file for import and use in the financial program. The transfer takes place using a secure connection, such as that provided by the Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) protocol. Alternatively, the information may be sent in an e-mail or as an attachment to an e-mail in an encrypted form.

The issuing of a check at ATM **700** may be initiated through a smart card or some other verification device. The check may be issued as a physical check to the user with an image of this check being sent to PDA **706** or client **708** as a receipt. Alternatively, the check may be sent electronically to a third party and printed at the third party premises.

Turning next to **Figure 8**, a diagram illustrating data flow in creating a check image is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. Paper document **800** is input or placed into an ATM, such as ATM **500,** through input slot **504** in **Figure 5**. In this example, paper document **800** is a check. Scanner **802** scans both sides of paper document **800**. In this manner, endorsements as well as signature and amount information from the front of the check may be obtained. Digital document **804** is generated by scanner **802** and stored in memory **806** for further processing. Optical character recognition (OCR) processes may be initiated to process digital document **804** to generate information used in creating a markup language representation of paper

document **800**. In these examples, this markup language representation forms an electronic check.

With reference now to **Figure 9**, a diagram of a smart card, which may be used to create an electronic check, is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. Smart card **900** is a credit card with microprocessor **902** and memory **904** and is used for identification or financial transactions. When inserted into a reader through slot **502** in ATM **500** in **Figure 5**, smart card **900** transfers data to and from ATM **500**. In these examples, smart card **900** contains private key **906** and public key **908** within memory **904**. Smart card **900** is more secure than a magnetic stripe card and can be programmed to self-destruct if the wrong password is entered too many times. As a financial transaction card, smart card **900** can be loaded with digital money and used like a traveler's check, except that variable amounts of money can be spent until the balance is zero. These keys are used for digital signing of checks in these examples.

More precisely, the private key is used in the process of applying a digital signature to an electronic check or to an electronic document. Applying a digital signature by using hashing operations and a private key is well known to those of ordinary skill in the art. However, for other activities the public key of an individual is also typically stored in a smart card, and this is how smart card **900** has been depicted. Note that smart card **900** is depicted for the purposes of the preferred embodiment of the present invention. Other cards, such as credit cards, may also be used. Popular usage does not normally refer to credit cards as smart cards. However, technically speaking, even credit cards

are a type of smart card and are governed by internationally accepted appropriate smart card standards. Hence, the preferred embodiment of the present invention is illustrated through a generic smart card in preference to a conventional credit card or an ATM card.

Turning now to **Figure 10**, a diagram of a check presented on a display for completion is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. Check **1000** is an example of a check, which may be presented to a user on a display, such as display **512** in ATM **500** in **Figure 5**. Check **1000** is presented to the user after verification of the user's authority to generate a check. In the depicted examples, the verification is made by an insertion of a smart card into an ATM, such as ATM **500** in **Figure 5**, along with entry of a correct password or PIN. The user may enter information into payee field **1002**, amount field **1004**, and memo field **1006**. Entry of an amount in amount field **1004** results in amount field **1008** being auto filled for the user. In this example, payee field **1002** and amount field **1004** are required fields that must be filled in for check **1000** to be complete. Memo field **1006** is an optional field, which may be left blank. In the depicted examples, a digital signature is used to complete the check and may be provided through the smart card. Depending on the implementation, the user may actually sign field **1010** using a stylus if the display includes a touch screen to accept such data.

When the user affirms that the check is complete and should be sent, the check may then be routed to the payee or to some other party in the form of an electronic

check. The electronic check is in the form of a markup language document as described above. More specifically, financial services markup language (FSML) is an example of a markup language which may be used to generate electronic checks.

Turning next to **Figure 11**, a diagram illustrating software components in an ATM is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. In this example, the software components in an ATM include operating system **1100**, scanner device driver **1102**, printer device driver **1104**, video device driver **1106**, network device driver **1108**, ATM transaction application **1110**, ATM transcode application **1112**, and ATM scan application **1114**.

The device drivers provide the components needed to operate devices within an ATM. These device drivers are used by ATM transaction application **1110**, ATM transcode application **1112**, and ATM scan application **1114** to perform various input/output functions.

ATM transaction application **1110** provides processes for various transactions by a user. Cash withdrawals, balance inquiries, fund transfers, and deposits are examples of transactions that may be handled through ATM transaction application **1110**. Additionally, ATM transaction application **1110** handles the transmission and receipt of information to and from various financial institutions. When a check is deposited, ATM scan application **1114** is initiated to create an image of the check. In the depicted examples, the image is of both sides of the check. Additionally, ATM scan application **1114** will also include optical character recognition

processes to obtain data for use in creating an electronic check. This data is used by ATM transcode application **1112** to generate a markup language representation of the check.

ATM transaction application **1110** also may transfer the image of a check and other information to a user mobile device, such as a PDA or mobile phone. The user may then upload that information to a computer containing a financial program. The image and information are placed into a format that allows for its import into the financial program.

In these examples, the markup language may be financial services markup language (FSML) and sign digital markup language (SDML). FSML is used to implement electronic checks and other secure financial documents. FSML defines a method to structure documents into blocks of tagged content. Unlike HTML, which uses tags to inform processors about how to display content, FSML uses tags to inform processors about how to use the document content in financial applications. The FSML content blocks in an FSML document can be cryptographically sealed and signed in any combination needed by business applications. Document processors may also remove blocks without invalidating the signatures on the remaining blocks. They may combine signed documents and then sign blocks contained in the combined documents. Signatures are themselves structured as FSML blocks, as are the X.509 certificates needed by downstream processors to verify the signatures. Thus, signatures and certificates become part of the FSML document so that they can be verified and countersigned by later signers.

SDML is designed to tag the individual text items

making up a document, to group the text items into document parts which can have business meaning and can be signed individually or together, to allow document parts to be added and deleted without invalidating previous signatures, and to allow signing, co-signing, endorsing, co-endorsing, and witnessing operations on documents and document parts. The signatures become part of the SDML document and can be verified by subsequent recipients as the document travels through the business process. SDML does not define encryption, since encryption is between each sender and receiver in the business process and can differ for each link depending on the transport used. SDML is the generic document structuring and signing part of the FSML.

In the depicted examples, the markup language document forms an electronic check. Depending on the implementation, the electronic check also may include the image of the check.

Referring now to **Figures 12A-12B**, diagrams of an electronic check are depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. Electronic check **1200** is in the form of a financial services markup language (FSML) document. This example illustrates some fields that may be found within an electronic check. In this example, electronic check **1200** does not illustrate the actual certificate of data used in the document. Electronic check **1200** is an example of an electronic check which may be created by transcode application **1112** in **Figure 11** in response to scanning a check or creating a check, such as check **1000** in **Figure 10**.

In the depicted examples, the markup language

document forms an electronic check, such as an electronic representation of a physical check. Depending on the implementation, the electronic check also may include the image of the check.

Turning next to **Figure 13**, an illustration of a message sent from an ATM to a financial institution is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. Message **1300** is an example of a message that may be sent from an ATM to a financial institution. For example, an electronic check is generated at an ATM, such as ATM **108** in server **104** in **Figure 1**, for processing. The electronic check may be sent within message **1300**.

Message **1300** includes header **1302** and body **1304**. Header **1302** may include information, such as an identification of attachments and a delivery route for the message. Body **1304** may include signatures **1306** as well as content **1308**. Signature **1306** may be obtained from scanning of the check or via a digital signature from a smart card held by the user. Content **1308** may contain the digital image of the check and/or an electronic check. The electronic check may be a document created using FSML and SDML.

Turning next to **Figure 14**, a flowchart of a process used for creating an electronic check in an ATM is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. The process illustrated in **Figure 14** may be implemented within ATM scan application **1114** and ATM transcode application **1112** in **Figure 11**.

The process begins by receiving a check (step **1400**). Next, a user image is captured (step **1402**). This image

may be used for verification and identification purposes. Then, the check is scanned to obtain a digital image of the check (step **1404**). In these examples, both sides of the check are scanned. Additionally, this scanning step also may include reading magnetic ink data on the check, which may contain a bank identification number and a checking account number. Optical character recognition (OCR) is performed on the digital image of the check to generate data for use in creating an electronic check (step **1406**).

Then, a markup language document is generated representing the check (step **1408**). This markup language document forms an electronic check in this example. The markup language document and digital image are stored (step **1410**). Thereafter, the markup language document and the digital image are sent to the financial institution (step **1412**) with the process terminating thereafter. The markup language document and digital image are sent to the financial institution through a communications link, such as one provided by network **102** in **Figure 1**.

In this manner, the check deposited by the ATM user can be processed without requiring further physical handling to transfer funds to the ATM user's account. Thus, the process used for transferring funds between accounts may be streamlined through the creation of electronic checks from physical checks at an ATM.

Turning next to **Figure 15**, a flowchart of a process used for creating an electronic check is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. The process illustrated in **Figure 15** may be implemented as a set of computer instructions for use in

applications, such as ATM transaction application **1110** and ATM transcode application **1112** in **Figure 11**.

The process begins by receiving a smart card, such as smart card **900** in **Figure 9**, from a user (step **1500**). The user image is then captured (step **1502**). Next, a representation of a check, such as check **1000** in **Figure 10,** is displayed (step **1504**). The user is the payor in this example. User input is then received (step **1506**). This user input includes entry of information into fields, such as an amount for the check, a payee, and a memo. A determination is then made as to whether all required fields are completed (step **1508**).

If all required fields are completed, the entries are confirmed (step **1510**). This confirmation allows the user one last chance to make changes or to cancel the check before the transaction is initiated. Next, a determination is made as to whether the entries are confirmed (step **1512**). If confirmed, a markup language document is generated (step **1514**). This document forms the electronic check. The markup language document is then sent to the payee, to the payee's financial institution, or to some third party authorized to receive checks for the payee (step **1516**) with the process terminating thereafter.

With reference again to step **1512**, if the entries are not confirmed, the user is prompted for changes (step **1518**) and the process returns to step **1506** as described above. Turning back to step **1508**, if all required fields are not completed, then the user is prompted for completion (step **1520**) and the process returns to step **1506**.

Referring to **Figure 16**, a flowchart of a process used for processing a check deposited at an ATM is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. The process illustrated in **Figure 16** may be implemented in an ATM, such as ATM **600** in **Figure 6**. The processes illustrated in **Figure 16** may be applied to checks deposited by a user as well as to checks issued to the user.

The process begins by receiving a request for a check image from a mobile device (step **1600**). The request is verified (step **1602**). This verification step is employed to ensure that the mobile device is authorized to receive the image. This verification may be made through various mechanisms. For example, a certificate system may be employed to verify the request. The user image is attached to the check image (step **1604**). Other biometric data may be used to verify the customer making the request. For example, fingerprints or retinal scans may be employed. The user image may be obtained by a video camera at the ATM. This user image may be used to identify the user issuing a check or depositing a check in the case of multi-user accounts. Next, the digital image of the check and user image are sent to the mobile device, along with other data regarding the check, in some markup language format such as FSML (step **1606**). This information may be compressed to save storage space within the mobile device. This information is now available for further use, such as for importing the information into a financial program.

A check use alert is then sent to all associated accounts (step **1608**) with the process terminating thereafter. This alert allows all users of an account to

be aware of when a check is issued or deposited. The alert may, for example, include the check image as well as any debit or credit information. In this manner, all users of an account will be able to quickly identify the current amount of funds present within the account.

With reference now to **Figure 17**, a flowchart of a process used for processing check information is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. The process illustrated in **Figure 17** may be implemented in a financial program located on a device such as PDA **400** in **Figure 4** or client **118** in **Figure 1**.

The process begins by receiving an image of a check and financial information (step **1700**). This information is received in a file that is formatted for import by the financial program. The image is that of a check deposited or issued by the user. The financial information may include, for example, a verification of the credit or debit and current funds in the account. Other financial information may include an image of the user identification of the user involved in the transaction. This image may be used to track usage patterns for different users of a multi-user account.

If information is received in a markup language or other format, this information may be mapped from the markup language to the format used by the financial program through various well-known mapping processes. For example, fields in FSML identifying an amount, a payee, a payor, and a date may be identified and placed into a form for use by a financial program, such as Quicken 2001 Deluxe. These processes typically identify the desired fields in the source data structure and translate this data into a target data structure in which

the target data structure is recognized by the financial program.

Next, OCR processes may be performed on the image of the check to generate check data if such information has not been supplied by the bank concerned, such as in step **1606** in **Figure 16** (step **1702**). The financial data within the financial program is updated using the image, financial information, and check data (step **1704**) and the process terminates thereafter. This updating may include an analysis of spending and using habits, which may include usage patterns for different users for a multi-user account.

Turning next to **Figure 18**, a diagram illustrating header and data information used for translating data into a Quicken interchange format (QIF) is depicted in accordance with a preferred embodiment of the present invention. This format is used with text in an ASCII file to allow transactions to be moved from one account register to another account register, or to or from other programs that support this format. Column **1800** identifies the header that is found at the beginning of each file. Column **1802** identifies the types of data that will be found within the file containing this header. The entries in section **1804** illustrate types of data currently used in QIF files. The entry in section **1806** depicts a new type of data, a check image, which may be used in a QIF file. The types of data illustrated in **Figure 18** are illustrative of some of the types of data that may be transferred using QIF files.

Turning next to **Figure 19**, a sample QIF file, which may be processed by the present invention, is illustrated. In this example, QIF file **1900** includes

header line **1902**. This header line identifies QIF **1900** as a file containing a check image and other information regarding the check. For example, line **1904** identifies the date the check was deposited at an ATM, while line **1906** identifies the time of the deposit. Line **1908** provides a transaction number, line **1910** provides an ATM number, and line **1912** identifies a bank owing the ATM. Line **1914** provides header data for an image of the front of the check, while line **1916** provides header data for the image of the back of the check. Of course, other check data may be contained within QIF file **1900**, depending on the particular implementation.

According to the present invention, a new type of header to identify a data type as being a check image may be implemented to allow for importing of check images into financial programs. By including fields that correspond to storing check images, a QIF file containing this information may be used to import check images into a financial program.

It is important to note that while the present invention has been described in the context of a fully functioning data processing system, those of ordinary skill in the art will appreciate that the processes of the present invention are capable of being distributed in the form of a computer readable medium of instructions and a variety of forms and that the present invention applies equally regardless of the particular type of signal bearing media actually used to carry out the distribution. Examples of computer readable media include recordable-type media, such as a floppy disk, a hard disk drive, a RAM, CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, and transmission-type media, such as digital and analog

communications links, wired or wireless communications links using transmission forms, such as, for example, radio frequency and light wave transmissions. The computer readable media may take the form of coded formats that are decoded for actual use in a particular data processing system.

The description of the present invention has been presented for purposes of illustration and description, and is not intended to be exhaustive or limited to the invention in the form disclosed. Many modifications and variations will be apparent to those of ordinary skill in the art. For example, the smart card may be replaced by a regular credit card or ATM card with some loss in functionality. The embodiment was chosen and described in order to best explain the principles of the invention, the practical application, and to enable others of ordinary skill in the art to understand the invention for various embodiments with various modifications as are suited to the particular use contemplated.